



FAR WEST FOOTBALL LEAGUE **JUNIOR PLAYER – PLAYING UP and PLAYING DOWN POLICY**

POLICY STATEMENT:

The Far West Football League (FWFL) is an affiliated member of the South Australian Community Football League (SACFL) and as such recognises the Australian Football League (AFL) as the overarching Governing body.

The FWFL has a Junior Competition and as such acknowledges the requirement to maintain the junior age gap at no more than three (3) years. As such the FWFL junior competition currently consists of teams in 3 Grades consistent with this requirement and being:

- Colts – Under 17 years
- Under 14's - Under 14 years
- U11's - Under 11 Years

It is further acknowledged that some FWFL Clubs do not have sufficient players to fill all Club Junior grades, with this inclusive of the FWFL Modified Competition and that at times a younger player would benefit from 'playing up a grade' and to assist in making up the numbers for a team.

It is also acknowledged that FWFL Clubs, Coaches and Parents have a duty of care when deciding on a player moving up or down a grade.

POLICY:

To assist Clubs to conduct reasonable duty of care to protect the younger children from any injury the following policy is considered the appropriate steps to take.

CHILD PLAYING UP:

- The relevant Club will designate the Coaches from both grades to determine which child/children are skilled enough and would benefit from playing up. This can be done at the commencement of the season or on the day of a match if required.
- The Coach or a Senior Representative of the Club must seek approval from the child's parents or guardian and such approval must be in writing (Appendix A), deemed to be a waiver to ensure the parent or guardian is aware of the potential risk of injury.
 - This written approval is to be retained by the Club with a signed copy forwarded to the FWFL Secretary for registering.
- The child/children must wear an orange fluorescent arm band (or other identification as directed by the Board in the interim) on the left upper arm of the child/children
- The umpire is to be advised of any child/children so identified as a '*player playing up*'
- The child must be recognised on the team sheet as an underage player
- The player should benefit from the opportunity to play up based on his/her skills and strength.

- Coaches should endeavour to match players by age and ability in accordance with the AFL Junior Match Guide
- The umpire must be informed of this process and use his/her best endeavours to protect the child
- This can only occur for a Child playing up **one grade only** (moving from U14 to U17 as an example) or if the club only has one junior competition
- That Leagues on an annual basis discuss with Clubs possible modified rules or the sharing of junior players amongst clubs. Refer the AFL Junior Football Guide. *The AFL has recognised that in regional and rural areas the opportunity to conduct competitions with a 2 year age span is not always possible. That reducing player numbers is recommended (9-12 a side).*

CHILD PLAYING DOWN:

- Clubs must apply to the FWFL Permit Committee for a 'permit' for an over-age player/s to play down a grade at the beginning of the season or at such time deemed necessary by the Club. This application must be made per the 'FWFL Junior Player – Play Down Form.
- The decision to apply for a permit should only be made based on possible medical condition and/or disability, child's size or ability. In some cases applications may be made based on the child's size and/or ability.
- Any application must be accompanied by a Medical Certificate, signed by a Medical Practitioner, stating the nature of the player's circumstances / condition and a detailed report recommending that the player 'play down'
- The application for a 'Playing Down' Permit must be forwarded to the FWFL and players may not play down unless written approval from the FWFL has been received
- Although this policy relates to the FWFL Junior Competition, it is recognised there may be players who suffer medical / physical conditions which seriously impedes their ability to play within the senior competition. In such cases an application may be forwarded to the FWFL, but consideration will only be given subject to
 - The age of the player/s; and
 - Medical evidence of the medical condition and/or physical disability. In such cases a Medical Certificate signed by a Medical Practitioner / Specialist must accompany the application.
- The Club must agree that the player or players are suitable to play against younger children
- The Coaches should endeavour to match players by ability and size on match day
- The parents of the younger age group must be informed that there will be an older child / children on the field
- The player is to be noted on the team sheet

- The umpire must be made aware by the Coach or the Club of the team
- The child/children must wear an orange fluorescent arm band (or other identification as directed by the Board in the interim) on the left upper arm of the child/children
- The Club making the application and Parents / Guardian's must acknowledge the following conditions will apply to permits issued under this policy. These will include, but not restricted to:
 - Permits are issued for the player to play only within the grade/team nominated
 - The FWFL reserves the right to revoke any permit if it is found –
 - The player has played up in another age group/team
 - The player is reported or sent from the playing field by any Official
 - It is identified the player has not played within the rules of Australian Rules Football and/or Junior Policy

RECOMMENDATION:

- This policy is to be read in conjunction with the AFL Junior Football Guide
- The FWFL on an annual basis will discuss with Clubs possible modified rules or the sharing of junior players amongst Clubs. (Refer the AFL Junior Football Guide.)

OUTCOME:

The FWFL wishes to provide satisfaction to the Insurance Underwriters that a reasonable 'duty of care' is in place to enable our Clubs, to allow players to play up for the benefit of the sport, the Club and the Players. Therefore this Duty of Care Statement is adopted so that our insurance policy will cover all players concerned.

REFERENCES:

FWFL By Laws
 SACFL Rules and Regulations
 AFL Junior Football Guide
 Rules of Australian Football



Far West Football League

Junior Player "Play Down" Form

The _____ Football Club makes an application for:

Player Name: _____

Address: _____ Post Code: _____

To 'Play Down' in (Age Group/Team): _____

Player's Date of Birth: _____ Player's Height: _____ Player's Weight: _____

Eligible Age Group: _____ Desired Age Group: _____

Please include on a club letterhead,

- Details of the player with reasons for the permit application; and
- Medical certificate signed by a Medical Practitioner, stating the nature of the player's circumstances / condition and a detailed report recommending that the player 'play down'.

This application is made by the club on behalf of the aforementioned player by:

Signed (President/Secretary): _____ Date: _____

This application is made by the club at my/our request and all details supplied are true and correct.

Signed Parent/Guardian: _____

- Please send the completed form to the Far West Football League Secretary at farwestfl@sanflcfl.com.au
- Players may not play down unless written approval from the Far West Football League has been received.
- Permits are issued for the player to play within the grade/team nominated only.
- The Far West Football League reserves the right to revoke any permit if it is found –
 - The player has played up in another age group/team
 - The player is reported or sent from the playing field by any Official
 - It is identified the player has not played within the rules of Australian Rules Football and/or Junior Policy

Unless stated otherwise, this Play Down Form is valid for the 2017 season only.

Far West Football League Official Use Only:

Date Received: ____ / ____ / ____

- 1. Medical Certificate if required: Yes/No**
- 2. Supports Reason for Playing Down: Yes/No**
- 3. Application Granted: Yes/No**
- 4. Play Down Valid For:** _____



Far West Football League Junior Player "Play Up" Form

The _____ Football Club makes notification of its acceptance for:

Player Name: _____

Address: _____ Post Code: _____

To 'Play Up' in (Age Group / Team) _____

Player's Date of Birth: _____ Player's Height: _____ Player's Weight: _____

Eligible Age Group: _____ Desired Age Group: _____

Eligible Age Group Verified: _____

Please provide a brief description of the reason below.

I hereby give my son/daughter permission to play football with the _____ Football Club in one age group higher than his/her designated age group.

The _____ Football Club has informed me of the difference in rules and possible playing conditions between the age groups (if applicable) and I fully understand these differences.

Signed Parent/Guardian: _____ Date: _____

Club Official Use Only

Signed Club President/Secretary: _____ Date: _____

Copy forwarded to Far West Football League - Official Registrar Use Only

Sighted
Signed FWFL Secretary: _____ Date: _____